Blue Raiders shut down No. 18 Trojans in 4-0 win

Gilley sets the pace for team

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee took its second Sun Belt series of the season with a 4-0 win over No. 18 Troy in front of 1,172 at Reese Smith Jr. Field on L.D. Agee Optimist Little League Day. "I want to thank Tony Stinnett and all of our Optimist Little League coaches, players and parents for a tremendous turnout. It was a great atmosphere and you could just feel the adrenaline from our players that they were just feeling it. We didn't play our greatest game but gave the crowd a great game," head coach Steve Peterson said. Senior Eric Gilley set the pace from the beginning of the game taking his third win of the season on the mound. The Hendersonville, Tenn., native worked 7.1 innings allowing no runs on five hits with four strikeouts. "If Eric Gilley is locating a high strike fastball and guys are swinging at it he is going to have a great day. Then he gets the table-top curve ball it's really hard to layoff it. Then when it looked like he might lose control he would just locate the next pitch. He matched-up well with Troy today," Peterson said. Middle Tennessee's (12-14, 5-10) hitters backed him up with four runs on nine hits led by freshman Hank LaRue who went 2 for 4 with a double and RBI. Junior Matt Drake had just one hit on the day but made it count as it was a two-run home run to help seal the win. The Blue Raiders shutout Troy (26-9, 11-4) for the second straight game, the first two shutouts for the Trojans this season and handed the Trojans their first Sun Belt series loss of the season. Middle Tennessee is currently tied for eighth in the Sun Belt Conference race after Sunday's win. The Blue Raiders got on the board first as a single to left centerfield by Thomas allowed Acker, who doubled, to score from third, 1-0, in the bottom of the second. Middle Tennessee added a run in the eighth on a two-out double to left centerfield by LaRue allowing Guidry to score from second and make it a two-run lead. Then Drake hit a long ball to right field extending the Blue Raider lead to four, 4-0. The Blue Raiders will travel to Memphis, Tenn., for a two-game midweek series with Memphis. Tuesday, April 19's game is set for 6:30 p.m. while Wednesday, April 20's game will begin at 4 p.m. Middle Tennessee then returns to the friendly confines of Reese Smith Jr. Field for a Sun Belt Weekend series with UL-Monroe. Saturday, April 23 against the Warhawks is set for 6 p.m. and will air on CSS as the Sun Belt Game of the Week.

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